

February 7, 2008

RE: Anita Shattuck v. Department of Corrections (DOC)
Allocation Review No. ALLO-07-045

Dear Ms. Shattuck:

The Director's review of DOC's allocation determination of your position has been completed. The review was based on written documentation.

Background

In 2001, your supervisor approved the reallocation of your Office Assistant Lead position to the Secretary Administrative classification but the request was later denied by DOC. The matter was appealed to the Department of Personnel and on July 1, 2002, the Director's designee determined that your position should be reallocated to the Secretary Lead classification.

On February 22, 2007, you signed a Position Review Request form asking that your Secretary Lead position be reallocated to the Secretary Administrative classification. Your supervisor agreed that your Position Review Request (PRR) form was accurate and complete. DOC conducted a review of your position and by letter dated May 11, 2007, denied your request.

On June 11, 2007, you filed a request for a Director's review.

By notice dated November 15, 2007, Karen Wilcox, Director's Review Coordinator, informed the parties that the review would be considered through written documentation. Ms. Wilcox set an exhibit deadline of January 9, 2008 for the submission of additional documentation. Neither party submitted additional information.

Summary of Ms. Shattuck's Perspective

In your PRR, you assert that the Secretary Administrative classification is the best match for your position because you independently update the Offender Based Tracking System (OBTS);

contact headquarters staff in regard to offender transfers, work release referrals, and End of Sentence Reviews; serve as a liaison between your supervisor and other staff; and provide secretarial support to your supervisor including updating your supervisor's calendar, making travel arrangements, and prioritizing and distributing mail. You contend that your position has delegated decision making authority that is beyond the Secretary Lead classification. In your letter requesting a Director's review, you argue that you enter information from Facility Plans into OBTS which is work typically performed by higher level staff. You also argue that the work assigned to Secretary Administrative positions at other DOC facilities is inconsistent.

Summary of DOC's reasoning

DOC acknowledges that your lead responsibilities fit within both the Secretary Lead and the Secretary Administrative classifications. However, DOC asserts that you do not exercise delegated authority for higher level work found at the Secretary Administrative level because much of your work is done following final signature by the Correctional Program Manager, or "as approved through the classification process," or as "based on previously targeted dates established through the classification process." (See your PRR). In addition, DOC asserts that your duties do not rise to the level of administrative duties encompassed in the distinguishing characteristics of the Secretary Administrative classification. DOC argues that regardless of whether you now report to a WMS 2 position, the majority of your duties are the same as those you performed during your 2001 position review. DOC argues that without delegated authority for higher level duties, your position does not meet the Secretary Administrative classification.

Director's Determination

As the Director's designee, I carefully reviewed all of the documentation in the file including the duties and responsibilities described in your Position Review Request form. Based on my review of the documents, the available classifications, and my analysis of your assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude that your position is best described by the Secretary Lead classification.

Rationale for Determination

The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. See Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

In your Director's review request letter, you referenced inconsistency in the duties assigned to Secretary Administrative positions at DOC facilities. In Byrnes v. Dept's of Personnel and Corrections, PRB No. R-ALLO-06-005 (2006), the Personnel Resources Board held that "[w]hile a comparison of one position to another similar position may be useful in gaining a better understanding of the duties performed by and the level of responsibility assigned to an incumbent, allocation of a position must be based on the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to an individual position compared to the existing classifications. The allocation or

misallocation of a similar position is not a determining factor in the appropriate allocation of a position.” Citing to Flahaut v. Dept's of Personnel and Labor and Industries, PAB No. ALLO 96-0009 (1996). Therefore, the allocation or misallocation of Secretary Administrative positions at DOC facilities is not a determining factor in the appropriate allocation of your position at Coyote Ridge Corrections Center.

In summary, your PRR lists 55% of your duties as:

- Processing Facilities Plans and preparing them for signature by the Correctional Program Manager and entering information into OBTS.
- Corresponding with other staff regarding information approved through the classification process and consistent with existing procedures, policies and timelines; entering information into OBTS.
- Changing information in OBTS based on previously targeted dates established through the classification process and consistent with existing policies and timelines.
- Responding to inquiries from others.
- Reviewing the work of other staff for grammar and punctuation, resolving clerical problems and providing direction to assure existing procedures, policies and timelines are followed.
- Serving as liaison between your supervisor and various staff also supervised by your supervisor; relaying information, responding to inquiries, answering pertinent question, clarifying instructions and resolving issues and conflicts.
- Scheduling classroom space.
- Receiving, reviewing and logging information in OBTS and routing information to assure existing timelines are met.
- After final signature of the Superintendent's designee, reviewing, logging and distributing information regarding family visits and marriage applications; receiving, reviewing for accuracy, logging and preparing on-site/off-site referrals; requesting batch reports from OBTS and distributing information as needed or requested.
- Keeping a daily record and tracking offenders in secured housing; developing and maintaining tracking systems for materials sent to the Correctional Program Manager for action.

The majority of these duties involve reviewing information, processing documents, and tracking information and documents. You do not initiate the majority of the information, rather the information is provided to you. You review information, then enter it into OBTS or other tracking systems and assure that existing procedures, policies and timelines are met. Because the majority of your work involves reviewing information initiated by others, your scope of independent judgment and decision-making authority is limited.

Your PRR identifies 30% of your duties as direct administrative and secretarial support to your supervisor, the Correctional Program Manager. These duties involve typing reports, correspondence and other documents; reviewing drafts for spelling, punctuation, clarity and terminology, drafting correspondence using your supervisor's input, making travel arrangements, keeping your supervisor's calendar, receiving and screening phone calls and visitors, maintaining your supervisor's filing system, scheduling interviews and checking references, evaluating

equipment costs and purchases, ordering office supplies and completing purchase requests; and using graphics software to make posters. These duties are typical of the secretarial and supportive duties performed by both the Secretarial and Secretarial Administrative classifications.

The remainder of the duties described in your PRR are typical office support duties and involve: completing travel vouchers, acting as the first point of contact for staff with computer difficulties and contacting the Information Technology Department for resolution, assisting staff with use of DOC software applications including resetting and changing passwords, assisting IT staff with inventory, providing back-up to the Administrative Assistant 2 position, serving on interview panels, assisting other clerical staff, and providing coverage for the receptionist as needed.

The class series intent for the Secretarial Administrative classification states:

In support of a supervisor and/or staff members, provides secretarial services and assistance for the purpose of facilitating the supervisor's and/or staff members' own work and relieving the supervisor and/or staff members of day-to-day clerical detail. Applies knowledge of supervisor's and/or staff members' work commitments including status of projects and nature of contacts. Secretarial duties include making travel arrangements, scheduling meetings, taking notes and transcribing minutes, screening calls and visitors, keeping supervisor's and/or staff members' calendar(s) and committing supervisor's and/or staff members' time.

The definition for the Secretarial Administrative classification states: "[p]erforms administrative and secretarial support duties for a manager or administrator."

You provide secretarial services and assistance in support of your supervisor and you relieve your supervisor of day-to-day clerical details. Your position fits within the class series intent and the definition of this classification.

However, the distinguishing characteristics for the Secretarial Administrative classification state:

Performs administrative and secretarial support duties for a manager and/or administrator in Washington Management Service at Band II or above, or in exempt service. With delegated authority, performs higher level administrative duties and/or provides and coordinates administrative support functions for a large unit having multiple supervisors. Higher level administrative duties are duties of a substantive nature that are appropriate to the supervisor's or other professional level class, but have been delegated to the Secretary Administrative to perform. Duties include administering, providing and/or coordinating functions such as budget development and/or management, expenditure control, office space management, public relations, personnel administration, records management, equipment purchases, and report preparation. Establishes and ensures adherence to administrative support procedures. Represents the supervisor's and/or unit's goals and interests. Provides interpretation or explanation of supervisor's policies or viewpoints.

Uses independent judgment to accomplish assignments or solve problems. Responsible for developing new work methods, procedures, or strategies or modifying existing work methods, procedures, and strategies to solve new or unusual problems. Plans and prioritizes work to meet internal and external deadlines. Work is subject to review at the completion stage to determine effectiveness in producing expected results.

Your position does not have delegated authority for higher level administrative duties that are appropriate to your supervisor's level. Your duties do not "include administering, providing and/or coordinating functions such as budget development and/or management, expenditure control, office space management, public relations, personnel administration, records management, equipment purchases, and report preparation." Rather, your position provides secretarial and clerical support in areas such as creation, storage, retrieval, mailing, and posting of documents, data, and records; providing information to others; preparing typed documents; screening calls and visitor; making travel arrangements; and scheduling meetings. Your position does not meet the distinguishing characteristics of the Secretarial Administrative classification.

The class series concept for the Secretarial classes states:

Positions in this category provide a variety of clerical services and/or secretarial duties in support of a work unit, department, supervisor(s), staff members, and/or general day-to-day office operations. Services provided and duties performed include functions such as the creation, storage, retrieval, mailing, and posting of documents, data, and records, providing assistance to others in direct support of the work, providing information to others about services available, assisting customers with access to services, updating web sites, preparing typed documents, screening calls and visitors, making travel arrangements, scheduling meetings and/or classes, taking notes and transcribing minutes, keeping supervisor's and/or staff member's calendar(s) and committing supervisor's and/or staff member's time.

Positions in this category operate office equipment such as computers, word processors, typewriters, calculators and copy machines. Positions may operate word processing equipment a majority of the time and/or operate data entry equipment such as remote terminals, computers, sorters, interpreters, optical readers and scanners to input, retrieve, sort, and interpret data.

The Secretarial classifications further provide that, "[s]ecretarial positions differ from Clerical, Office Support positions in that the primary focus of Secretarial positions is to provide secretarial services and assistance to one or more individuals. Secretarial positions typically facilitate the supervisor's and staff members own work, relieve the supervisor and/or staff members of day-to-day clerical details, apply knowledge of supervisor's work commitments including status of projects and nature of contacts, and commit supervisor's time."

Your position fits within the class series concept and the description of the Secretarial classes. The primary focus of your position is to provide complex secretarial support and assistance to your supervisor and relieve your supervisor of the day-to-day clerical details, such as entering

information into OBTS, tracking information, proofreading the work of others, checking the work of others for completeness, and relaying information from your supervisor to others.

The distinguishing characteristics of the Secretary Lead classification state:

As the designated lead worker, assigns, instructs and checks the work of lower level staff and performs the duties of Secretary Senior including complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing and prioritizing work, monitoring and evaluating budget(s) status and initiating corrections, developing travel itineraries, compiling reports, studies, applications, and developing, modifying and/or maintaining data base management, office record keeping, or filing system(s). Positions establish office procedures, standards, priorities, and deadlines, coordinate office operations, initiate action to ensure work unit and/or office goals are met, and have frequent contacts with clients, the public, staff members from other departments, students, and faculty.

Assignments and projects are of a complex nature. Independent performance of complex secretarial assignments requires substantive knowledge of a variety of regulations, rules, policies, procedures, processes, materials, or equipment. Problems are resolved by choosing from established procedures and/or devising work methods. Guidance is available for new or unusual situations. Deviation from established parameters requires approval. Work is periodically reviewed to verify compliance with established policies and procedures.

Your position fits within the distinguishing characteristics of the Secretary Lead classification. Your PRR establishes that you are delegated lead responsibilities for two Office Assistant Senior positions. Using your substantive knowledge of policies, procedures and timelines, you perform complex secretarial duties including organizing and prioritizing work, monitoring and evaluating purchase requests and orders, developing travel itineraries, compiling reports and other documents, and developing and maintaining data bases, office record keeping, and filing systems. You assure that office procedures, standards, priorities, and deadlines are met; coordinate office operations; initiate action to ensure timelines are met; and have frequent contacts with staff members.

Overall, the majority of your duties, responsibilities and level of delegated authority are best described by the Secretary Lead classification. Your position is properly allocated.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to . . . the Washington personnel resources board Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The address for the Personnel Resources Board is 2828 Capitol Blvd., P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

Sincerely,

Holly Platz, SPHR
Director's Review Investigator

cc: Lois Bergstrom, DOC
Joanne Harmon, DOC
Lisa Skriletz, DOP